

► Taking Care of Yourself

INCREASE YOUR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY.

Within the first 24 - 48 hours, periods of physical activity, alternated with relaxation, will alleviate some physical stress.

SHARE YOUR STRESS. Sometimes just talking with a friend, co-worker or family member helps.

RECOGNIZE YOUR LIMITS. As tough as it is, learn to accept the fact that you are not capable of doing all things all of the time! Neither is anyone else.

SLEEP AND DIET. The better nourished and rested you are, the better equipped you are to tackle your stress.

GET INVOLVED. Becoming a member of a positive activity is a good way to reduce stress. It's all right to ask for help from family, friends and your community.

ALCOHOL AND DRUGS. Even though they might make you feel better for the moment, neither helps manage your stress. Instead they end up aggravating it.

DO THINGS YOU ENJOY. Laugh and smile when you can.

REALIZE PEOPLE AROUND YOU ARE STRESSED ALSO. Everyone thinks and feels differently but are probably experiencing some of the same reactions that you are. Reach out to them.

And, above all, **REMEMBER**, you are normal and your reactions are like those of anyone experiencing an abnormal event.



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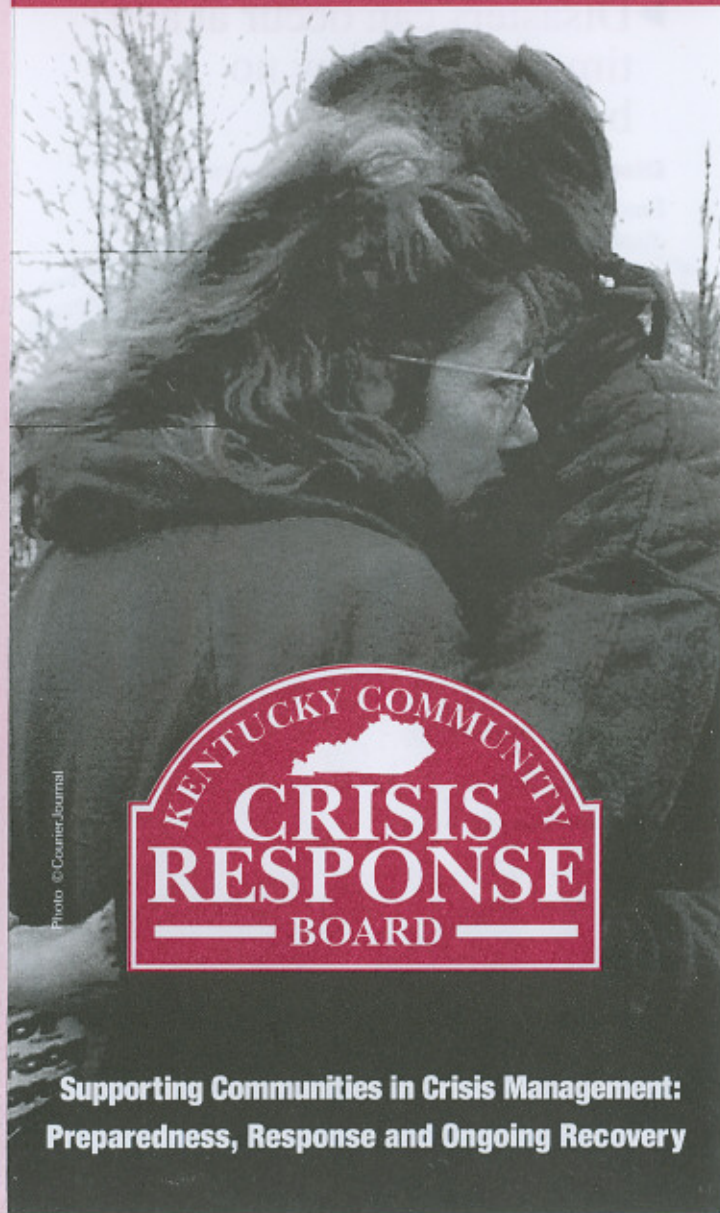
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Help for Disaster Survivors



Supporting Communities in Crisis Management:
Preparedness, Response and Ongoing Recovery



► Disasters can occur at any time. They know no bounds.

Disasters impact people in many ways.

Emotional effects from loss of home, family pets, displacement from neighbors, friends, church and school may cause unusual stress as people begin to reconstruct their lives.

► Emotional Health Issues

All people are vulnerable to the overwhelming nature of disasters.

Disasters Affect Individuals

- Emotionally
- Change relationships
- Disrupt work
- Cause financial worry



► Additional Stressors Include

- Paperwork
- Insurance issues
- Home repair or reconstruction

► Common Stress Reactions

Initial adult responses to disaster can include:

- Fear
- Disbelief
- Reluctance to leave one's property
- Feeling overwhelmed

These are NORMAL REACTIONS and are time-limited. Sometimes talking with a mental health professional is helpful.

Children may demonstrate worry and increased "acting out" behavior.

Adults can help by:

- Listening and providing information about the disaster
- Giving physical comfort and reassurance
- Providing extra time and attention at bedtime
- Reinforcing normal routines, play, meals and sleep



► Older adults may become withdrawn, agitated, disoriented and confused.

When working with older adults:

- Provide consistent verbal reassurance
- Assist them in recovering physical possessions
- Pay special attention to returning them to familiar surroundings with friends and acquaintances
- Ensure medical and financial assistance
- Help establish familiar social networks
- Re-establish and monitor nutritional and medication needs

